

COLORADO

SPECIAL PRESS RELEASE



**NATIONAL
AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS
SERVICE**

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PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS

COLORADO HIGHLIGHTS

Colorado growers intend to plant 1,370,000 acres of corn for all purposes in 2011, three percent above last year's plantings. Sorghum intentions are 190,000 acres, down 20,000 acres from plantings last year. Winter wheat seedings last fall for harvest in 2011 remain estimated at 2,500,000 acres from January's report. This is up 50,000 acres from the 2010 crop. Growers intend to seed 40,000 acres of spring wheat this year, up 12,000 acres from last year. The area expected to be seeded to oats, at 55,000 acres, is equal to the actual seedings a year ago. Planting intentions for barley are up 4,000 acres to 68,000 acres. Growers intend to plant 100,000 acres of sunflowers this year, down 32,000 acres from what they planted in 2010. The acreage of oil varieties is expected to total 75,000 acres, down 20,000 acres from last year's plantings. The area planted to non-oil varieties is expected to decrease 12,000 acres to 25,000 acres this year. The State's dry bean growers indicate they will plant 49,000 acres this year compared with 70,000 acres last year. The area planted to sugarbeets is expected to increase 1,300 acres from last year's actual plantings to 30,200 acres. Hay producers in the State intend to harvest 1,600,000 acres this year. This is unchanged from the number of acres cut for hay in 2010.

Mountain snowpack is 111 percent of average statewide, northern areas have above average snowpack while southern areas are below average. Farmers with appropriate water rights should be able to irrigate crops this year. Currently, many growing areas have short soil moisture supplies due to a very dry winter. Final acreages actually planted for several crops will be determined by irrigation water prospects, soil moisture levels at planting time, and changes in economic conditions between now and actual planting.

UNITED STATES HIGHLIGHTS

Corn growers intend to plant 92.2 million acres of corn for all purposes in 2011, up 5 percent from last year and 7 percent higher than in 2009. If realized, this will be the second highest planted acreage in the United States since 1944, behind only the 93.5 million acres planted in 2007. Acreage increases of 250,000 or more are expected in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, and South Dakota. The largest decrease is expected in Texas, down 150,000 acres.

Sorghum growers intend to plant 5.65 million acres of sorghum for all purposes in 2011, up 4 percent from 2010. Producers in Kansas expect to plant 2.50 million acres this year, up 6 percent from 2010. Texas growers expect to plant 1.80 million acres, down 5 percent from the previous season. Kansas and Texas account for 76 percent of the expected United States acreage. As of March 27, Texas had planted 46 percent of their sorghum crop.

The area seeded to oats for the 2011 crop year is expected to total 2.84 million acres, down 10 percent from the 3.14 million acres planted last year. If realized, this will be the lowest United States total on record. Planted acreage is expected to decrease or remain unchanged in all but three of the 31 estimating States, with 20 of the States expecting record lows. The largest decrease in seeded acreage is expected in Wisconsin, where growers intend to plant 70,000 acres less than last year. Other States with notable acreage decreases include Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Increases in seeded acreage are expected in Arkansas, Maine, and Texas.

Barley producers intend to seed 2.95 million acres of barley for the 2011 crop year, up 3 percent from the 2.87 million acres seeded in 2010. If realized, this will be the second lowest seeded acreage on record. Area seeded to barley is expected to increase by 10,000 acres in Idaho and Montana, two of the three largest barley-producing States. The largest decrease in acreage is expected in North Dakota, where producers intend to seed 690,000 acres, a reduction of 30,000 acres from last year's record low. The expected decrease is largely driven by a decline in barley prices from recent years and the increased profitability of other crops such as corn and soybeans. Seeded area is also anticipated to decline to record low levels in Kansas, Michigan, and South Dakota.

Over please

The 2011 winter wheat planted area is estimated at 41.2 million acres, up 10 percent from 2010 and up 1 percent from the *Winter Wheat Seedings* report. Of the 2011 total acreage, about 29.4 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 8.2 million acres are Soft Red Winter, and 3.7 million acres are White Winter. Acres are up across all of the Soft Red winter area from 2010 due to the early row crop harvest and higher prices. The largest increases in the Soft Red Winter growing area are in Arkansas, Illinois, and Missouri, each up more than 300,000 acres. With concerns of a lack of moisture reported throughout much of the Great Plains, Hard Red Winter acres are down in Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Producers expect to harvest 59.0 million acres of all hay in 2011, down 1 percent from 2010. If realized, this will be the fourth lowest harvested acreage on record. Harvested area is expected to decrease from last year throughout most of the western two-thirds of the Nation, primarily due to lower livestock inventories, an increase in acreage being planted to other crops with higher prices, and drought conditions in the Southern Great Plains. The largest decreases in acreage harvested are expected in Idaho, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas. Compared with last year, producers in Oklahoma and Texas intend to harvest 110,000 and 220,000 less acres, respectively, while growers in Pennsylvania expect to harvest 100,000 more acres.

Soybeans growers intend to plant an estimated 76.6 million acres in 2011, down 1 percent from last year. If realized, the United States planted area will be the third largest on record. Compared with last year, planted acreage is down or unchanged across most of the Corn Belt, the central and southern Great Plains, and most of the Southeast. Declines of 100,000 acres or more are expected in Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, and Ohio. Meanwhile, the States expecting the largest increases compared with last year are North Dakota, up 250,000 acres, and Missouri, up 150,000 acres. If realized, the planted area in New York and North Dakota will be the largest on record.

Sunflower growers intend to plant a total of 1.81 million acres in 2011, down 8 percent from last year. Area intended for oil type varieties, at 1.40 million acres, is down 4 percent from 2010. The area intended for non-oil varieties, estimated at 405,000 acres, is down 17 percent from last year, but will still be the second highest planted area since 2005, if realized.

The area planted to sugarbeets for the 2011 crop year is expected to total 1.19 million acres, up 1 percent from the 1.17 million acres planted in 2010. Planting intentions increased in half of the estimating States. The largest increase in planted area is expected in North Dakota, where producers intend to plant 227,000 acres, 10,000 acres more than last year. Intended plantings decreased in California, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, and Wyoming. In Minnesota, the largest sugarbeet-producing State, a 4,000 acre decrease is anticipated. Planted area in California is expected to total 25,000 acres. If realized, this will establish a new record low for the seventh consecutive year for California.

Dry Beans growers intend to plant 1.30 million acres in 2011, down 32 percent from last year. The decrease in planted acres can be mainly attributed to increased acreage intentions for competing crops, including corn and wheat. Expected area planted for all chickpeas is 138,900 acres, down 5 percent from last year. Small chickpea area, at 35,900 acres, is 43 percent higher than 2010. Large chickpea acreage is expected to be 15 percent less than last year. Small chickpeas are defined as peas that will pass through a 20/64 inch round hole screen. Acreage declines are expected in 16 of the 18 dry bean estimating States. In North Dakota, the largest producing State, growers intend to plant 350,000 fewer acres, which is the largest decrease from last year. Both Michigan and Minnesota are showing acreage decreases of 24 percent, while Nebraska growers reported a 26 percent decline.